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United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD

Tenth special session

CONCISE REPORT OF THE 513th MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 21 March 1979, at noon.

President: Mr. CASTILLERO (Venezuela)

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Consideration of proposals for action by the Conference at its fifth session

[illegible]

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS FOR ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE AT ITS FIFTH SESSION (agenda item 2) (continued) (TD/B/730, annexes II and III, TD/B/730/Add.1; ED/236)

1. Mr. HATTENLAUB (Federal Republic of Germany), speaking on behalf of Group B, said that the task of the Board, standing for the last time before the fifth session of the Conference (UNCTAD V), was to put the finishing touches on the provisional agenda for the Conference, to settle as many organizational questions as possible, and to deal with certain items referred to it by the subsidiary bodies. While negotiations were not possible in the Board itself, the current session would provide an opportunity to ascertain the present position of the regional groups.

2. Group B [illegible] with concern the fact that many of the preparatory documents for the Conference were still not available. For that reason it [illegible] was not in a position to make specific comments on the draft items. It [illegible] during the official part of the [illegible] Group B [illegible] Group of 77 (TD/236) concerning a [illegible] underlying concept of which Group B supported in principle.

3. [illegible]

4. [illegible]

5. [illegible]

The Conference would review the results achieved and consider the most appropriate way to continue the work. A discussion might be held, inter alia, on the implementation of measures provided for in Conference resolution 93 (IV) related to the economy of primary commodities and to development.

6. Group B was prepared to consider other appropriate commodity elements in the [illegible] trade and development but was somewhat hesitant to discuss food production and trade, as proposed by the Group of 77 for inclusion in agenda item 10, since it felt that specific and intensive talks were predominantly competent in that field.

7. With respect to monetary and financial issues (item 12), the Brusche Programme [illegible] Group B's position but was notably silent on the role of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund. Group B would support the idea, in discussing the organization of the work of the Conference, [illegible] to give the proposals on export earnings stabilization set out in the Brusche Programme [illegible] Group B appreciated that those [illegible] would be dealt with in a [illegible].

8. The results from recent [illegible] a number of important proposals on the transfer [illegible] Group B had expressed its position on public opening in the Group B [illegible] the question of the whole their [illegible] substantially their official development assistance, [illegible] the flow of private [illegible] flows in the multilateral [illegible] Group B would [illegible], and it was clear that political [illegible] the distribution of such increased flows.

[illegible] Group B was ready to examine any measures which [illegible] On the question of debt [illegible] Board [illegible] it would be possible there to [illegible] operations.

[illegible] examine where the view [illegible] of trade negotiations for the economic [illegible] Group IV a number of [illegible] the technological [illegible] also been achieved in [illegible] of technology and in [illegible] Property Organization, [illegible] Group B countries looked forward [illegible] further progress in [illegible].

11. Item 14, Shipping, involved two questions. The first could be covered by a code of conduct for liner conferences and, before the date of UNCTAD V, steps might be taken which could bring the code into effect. Group B recognized the right of all countries to participate in international trade and was prepared to consider any institutional barriers in the way of participation by developing countries in international bulk trade, and to consider ways of improving the competitiveness of their fleets. Group B could, as in the past, consider favourably the granting of financial and technical assistance for the development of the merchant marines of developing countries in the framework of overall development plans and priorities, not by individual countries.

12. Group B had noted with interest the proposals contained in the Paris Programme concerning the least developed, land-locked countries (item 15). However, Group B had long held a firm conviction that the most effective relief for the problems of those countries would be provided by the application of the general development programme of an approach which treated the aspirations of the needs of developing countries. It had also been willing to consider measures to assist the island developing countries (item 16).

13. Group B appreciated the initiative envisaged by the Group of 77 in the field of relations among countries having different economic and social systems and welcomed the over-all assessment in the Programme.

14. Concerning economic co-operation among developing countries (item 17), Group B had only carried out a first reading of the proposals by the Group of 77. It was aware of the possible consequences of the proposals for other groups, they would have to be considered carefully by the Governments of the Group B countries. The latter had always supported the concept of such co-operation, but at first sight the proposed new activities which it was suggested should be undertaken at the regional level appeared likely to have far-reaching institutional implications.

15. Regarding institutional issues (item 18) Group B was fully in accord with the basic objective described in the Arusha Programme - the consideration of measures to enable UNCTAD to carry out its role more effectively.

16. Since the Conference might not have enough time to devote the same attention to all the items on its agenda, it might be useful to use priorities in order to achieve agreement in those areas which it was mutually felt offer a good chance of progress, to the benefit of the developing countries and the international community as a whole.

The meeting rose at 6.p.m.